



From the South Carolina State House

The first regular session of the 122nd South Carolina General Assembly began in mid-January. What follows are some recent updates, compiled from various sources, on a handful of bills of interest to SIC members and the education community:

H.3516 – At the urging of House leadership Wednesday, the House of Representatives voted 97-18 to pass an amended roads repair bill restoring more than \$37 million in Education Improvement Act (EIA) funding.

H.3720 – The House Ways and Means Committee’s approved budget plan is scheduled to be placed on House members’ desks today. According to House rules, representatives will have the week to study the bill before it is debated on the floor of the House the following week. Budget highlights include: an increase of \$38 million in the Education Finance Act (EFA) to raise the base student cost from the current year’s \$2,350 to \$2,400, or \$50 per student; \$36 million for school districts to cover the cost of 1% of the required 2% increase in employer contribution for the state’s retirement system (SCRS); \$25.4 million to cover health insurance premium increases; \$100 million in Education Improvement Act (EIA) funds to districts with 80% or higher poverty index for instructional facilities, health/safety, and career/technology education upgrades, and deferred maintenance needs; nearly \$10 million in lottery funding and \$20 million in lottery surplus funds to purchase and/or lease school buses; and \$375,000 in EIA funds for teacher supplies.

S.338, R3 – A joint resolution authorizing school districts to start the 2017-18 school year on August 17 was signed into law last week. The earlier start date will relieve districts from starting on the third Monday in August when a rare solar eclipse is set to occur. The version of the bill that was signed into law is the Senate bill, which does not place requirements on districts that opt to start on August 17.

For additional information on these bills and others under consideration by the SC General Assembly, visit www.scstatehouse.gov.

SC School Improvement Council

<http://sic.sc.gov>

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